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FOR 1875.

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It has been compiled and printed at the Daily Press Office, as usual, from the best and most authentic sources, and no pains have been spared to make the work complete in all respects.

It is addition to the usual varied and voluminous information, the value of the CHRONICLE AND DIRECTORY FOR 1875 has been further augmented by a

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OF A

PLAN OF VICTORIA, HONGKONG;

THE

FOREIGN SETTLEMENTS OF

SHANGHAI.

A Chromolithograph Plate of the NEW CODE OF SIGNALS IN USE AT THE PEAK;

THE

VARIOUS HOUSE FLAGS

(Designed expressly for the Work)

MAPS OF HONGKONG, JAPAN,

THE

SILK-WORM DISTRICTS,

THE

ISLAND OF FOMOSA,

AND OF

THE COAST OF CHINA;

ALSO, THE

NEW CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE-

HONGKONG;

besides other local information and statistics corrected to date of publication, tending to make this Work in every way suitable for Public, Mercantile, and General Offices.

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Hongkong, 2nd January, 1876.

The Daily Press

HONGKONG, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1876.

AMONG the black spots which have darkened the Chinese national character in the eyes of foreigners the practice of infanticide has always been considered as one of the most signal evidences of their semi-barbarism. Considerable discussion has taken place of late years among better informed Europeans as to how far the natives were really chargeable with this odious and unnatural offence. In former times, when comparatively little was known of China and its people, very horrible stories of their gross cruelty and wanton-natural-feeling-in-them-respect-were widely circulated in Europe and almost universally believed in. When, however, more accurate knowledge was obtained by those who had better opportunities of learning the true state of the case, it was found that the prevalence of this crime had been much exaggerated, and some sensational and highly-coloured stories were forthwith demolished. Many writers had drawn on their imagination for their facts, and greedily devoured my wild tales told to them by others who were not careful to verify what they had heard. Thus Mr. Balfour, who wrote in the eighteenth century, said that there were round the streets of the capital to collect the bodies of the murdered and burnt infants, and he calculated the number destroyed at not less than 9,000 every year. He says further that swine were let loose into the streets, and infers that for the purpose of feasting on the bodies of the children thus sacrificed. Now statements of this sort, though they have never been supported by facts, are even yet very generally believed by the credulous, and a wrong and prejudicial estimate is consequently formed by people in Europe of the Chinese character. They are credited with utter want of natural affection for their female offspring, and a callous indifference to suffering and misery which only a minority really feel. The Chinese are, as a rule, very fond of their children, and pay an amount of attention and deference to their parents which many Europeans might with advantage copy.

It is not denied that infanticide is practised in some parts of China; but certainly not on the wholesale and systematic scale attributed to the people by some writers. There is little doubt but that it is far more prevalent than in most countries of Europe; but it may be urged in extenuation of the fact that the struggle to live is keener among the teeming population of the Middle Kingdom, and that the Chinese have never been taught to regard human life with the sanctity the Christian religion has caused western nations to esteem. There are very many of the better class of Chinese who deeply deplore the existence of the crime, and they have made several laudable efforts to extinguish it. But that it still flourishes in some parts of the Empire is beyond dispute. The Thoutai of Shanghai and his subordinate, the Tung-che, have lately been taking measures for its suppression. Of course this is a clear admission of the practice. But it is satisfactory to find that these officials are anxious to find a remedy for it. The Tung-che has published his views on the subject. He exhorts the inhabitants of the fu to kill their female children no more, but when one is born to them and they do not think themselves able to bring it up, to report the fact to him instead of resorting to murder to relieve them of the burden. "If," he continues, "the child born be a boy, I know it is safe; yet all want to have sons; but in the case of a daughter, rather than that you should kill her I will provide some cash for the mother and she must nurse the child until it is three

months old. Then, if the family still wishes to get rid of it, it is to go into an Asylum for such infants—most desolate than orphans—in which they will be reared if possible, and a fair chance of a happy future will be provided." The matter has, it is stated, enlisted the sympathies of the Chinese merchants and shopkeepers, who have subscribed cheerfully towards it. It is to be hoped that the movement, which is highly creditable to the Tao-tai and his delegate, will prove successful. In the interests both of humanity and civilisation, every one must desire to see this stain effaced from the Chinese name. At the same time, while it admittedly exists, and is in some districts unhealthily but too prevalent, it must not be imagined that the practice is by any means universal or sanctioned by the authorities. It is regarded by all right-thinking Chinese as a cruel and barbarous custom that ought to be put down, and it would be abolished if public opinion had much weight. It is one more illustration of the powerlessness and corruption of most of the officials, that few efforts are made to repress it, and that custom is allowed to rule where law should be paramount. Thus, in the proclamation of the Shanghai magistrates, there is more remonstrance than denunciation; persuasion is used instead of penalty threatened. It may be pleaded, no doubt, that the extreme poverty of the offenders often leaves them no other resource, but in that case the infant might be taken to the Foundling hospital, an institution of this description existing in most of the larger cities. The practice is undoubtedly contrary to Chinese law, and it is only custom that has taught the magistrates lenity to such criminals. The better the Chinese become acquainted with the civilisation and religion of the Western powers the more likely they are to reform their system of administering law, for it is the corrupt administration more than the law itself that is profile of evil and demoralisation.

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Hongkong, 2nd January, 1876.

The Daily Press

HONGKONG, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1876.

As will be seen by the above, Mr. Dave Carson and his troupe will give a performance at the Asturiano Theatre this (Friday) evening, by request of the Portuguese Consul, and the English and Portuguese Consuls included in the programme. Owing to the inconstancy of the weather the entertainment proposed to be given at the City Hall last night was postponed till tomorrow (Saturday) evening. Allusion is made to it in our advertising column.

At an enquiry held at Yokohama on the 3rd instant, Mr. Connel Robertson, into the circumstances attending the recent loss of the British barque *James Potts*, driven ashore on the 10th ult. at Fukiura, Japan, through stress of weather, the Court found that the vessel was well found, well manned, and properly ballasted; that every exertion was made to save the crew, and every effort to render the ship seaworthy for some time past, and was absent from his office for seven weeks previous to his death.

The affairs of the bank are in no way compromised.

The Japanese Consul of the instant enquired that a telegram was received at Yokohama from Shanghai on that date announcing that Mr. Wm. Beale, Assistant Manager in London of the Chartered Merchant Bank of London, had been unwell for some time past, and was absent from his office for seven weeks previous to his death.

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